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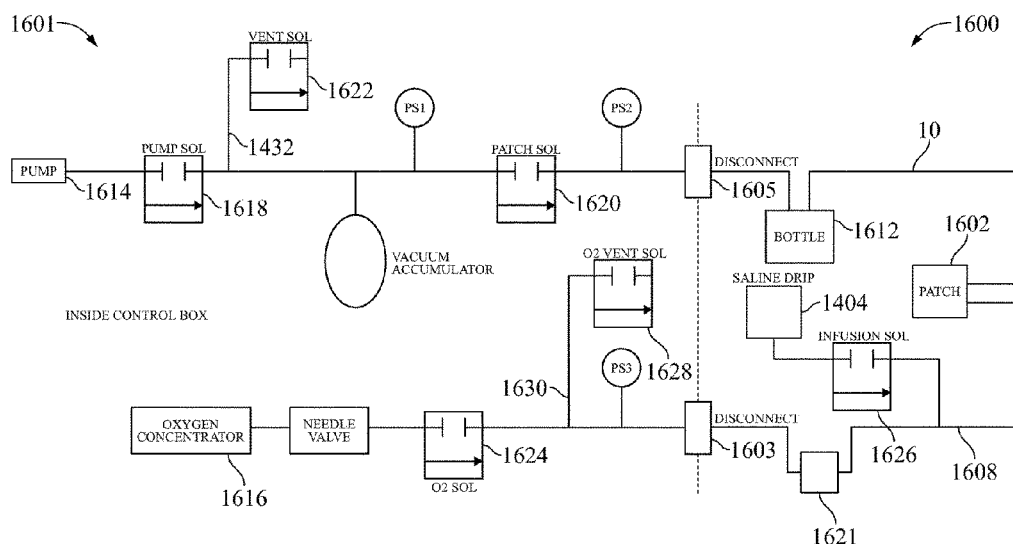
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- (57) **ABSTRACT**

A combination therapy pad that includes a first layer and a second layer operatively coupled to the first layer. A fiber-optic array is disposed between the first layer and the second layer. A third layer is operatively coupled to the first layer. The third layer includes a vacuum tube in fluid communication with a vacuum source and a therapeutic fluid tube in fluid communication with a therapeutic fluid source. The third layer provides at least one of vacuum therapy and therapeutic fluid treatment to a wound area.

10 Claims, 17 Drawing Sheets



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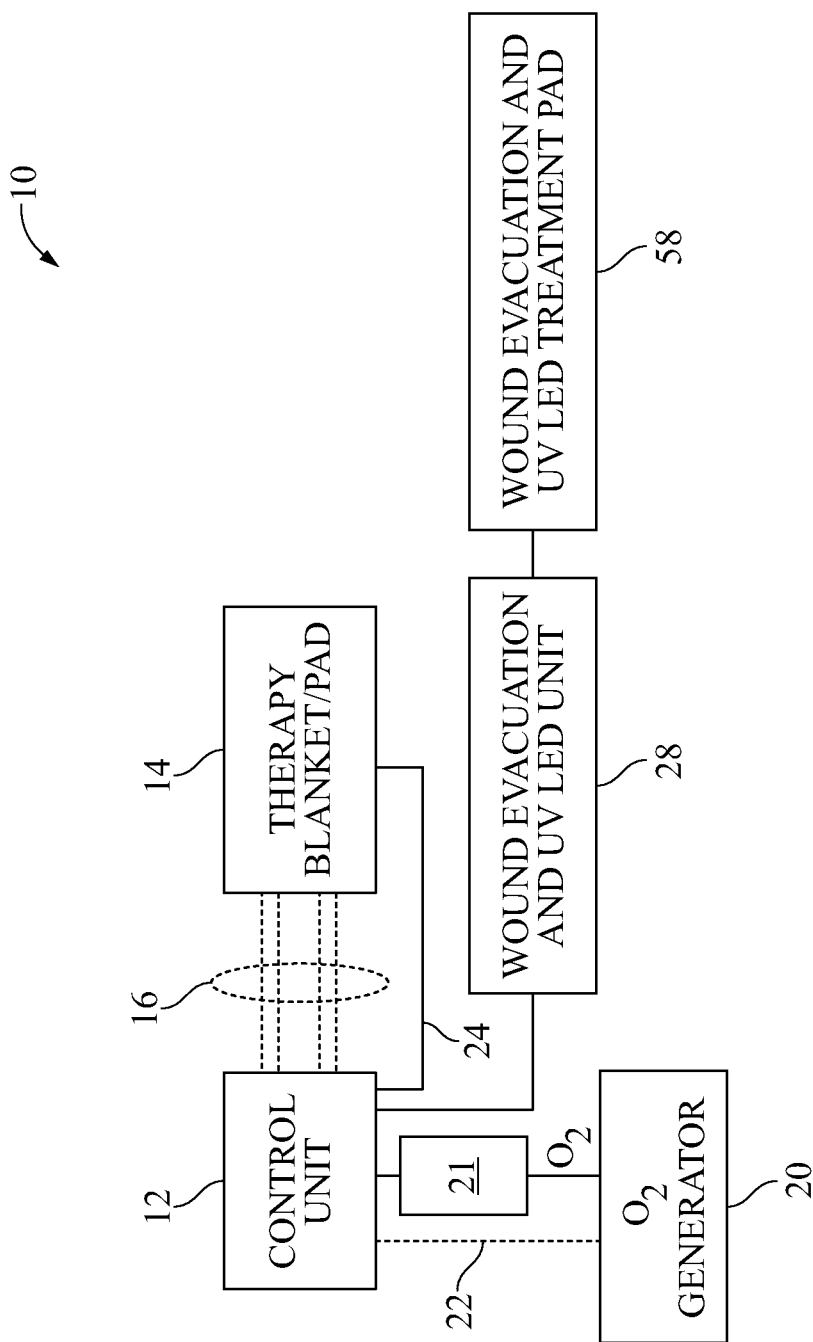


FIG. 1

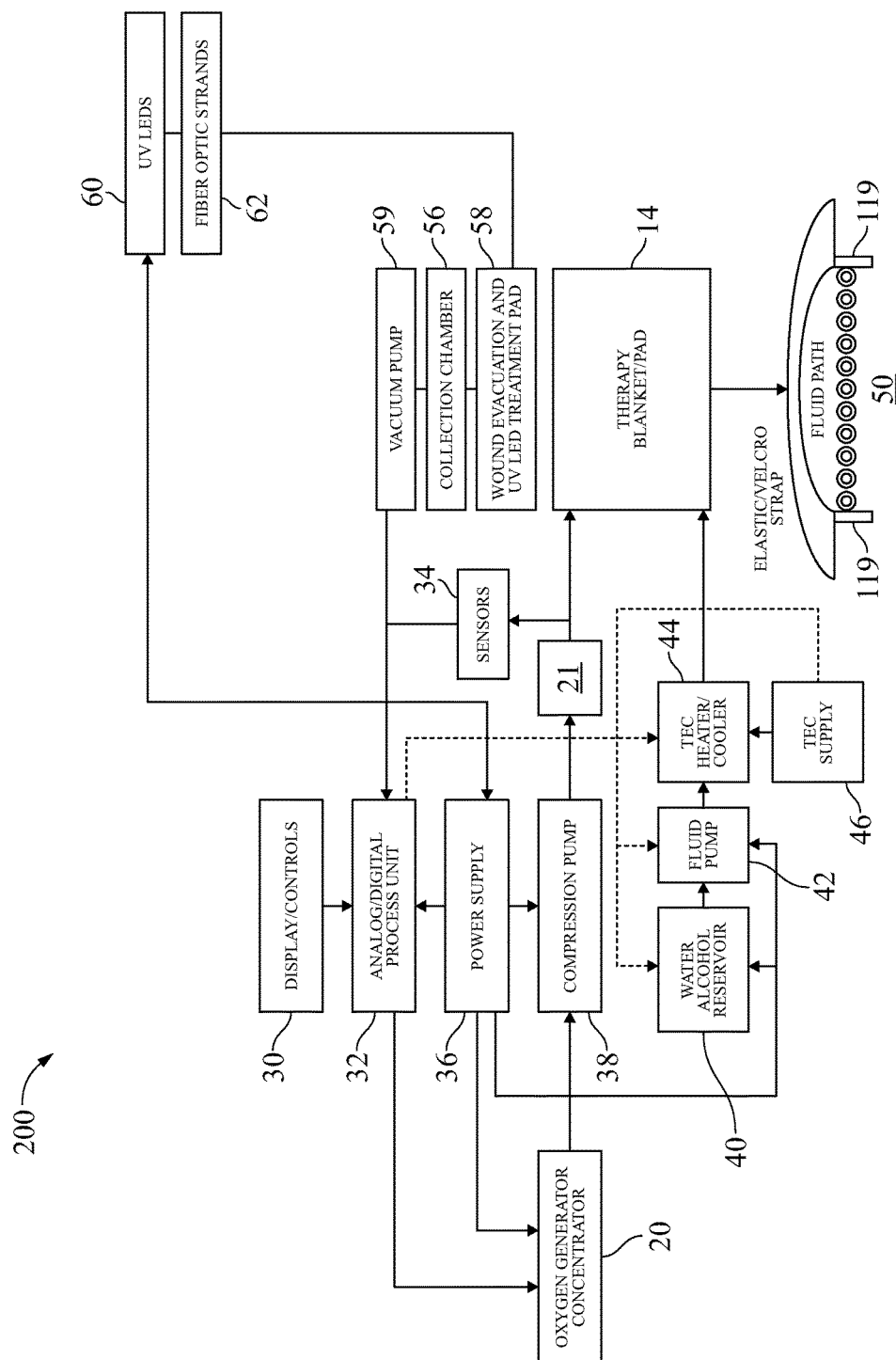
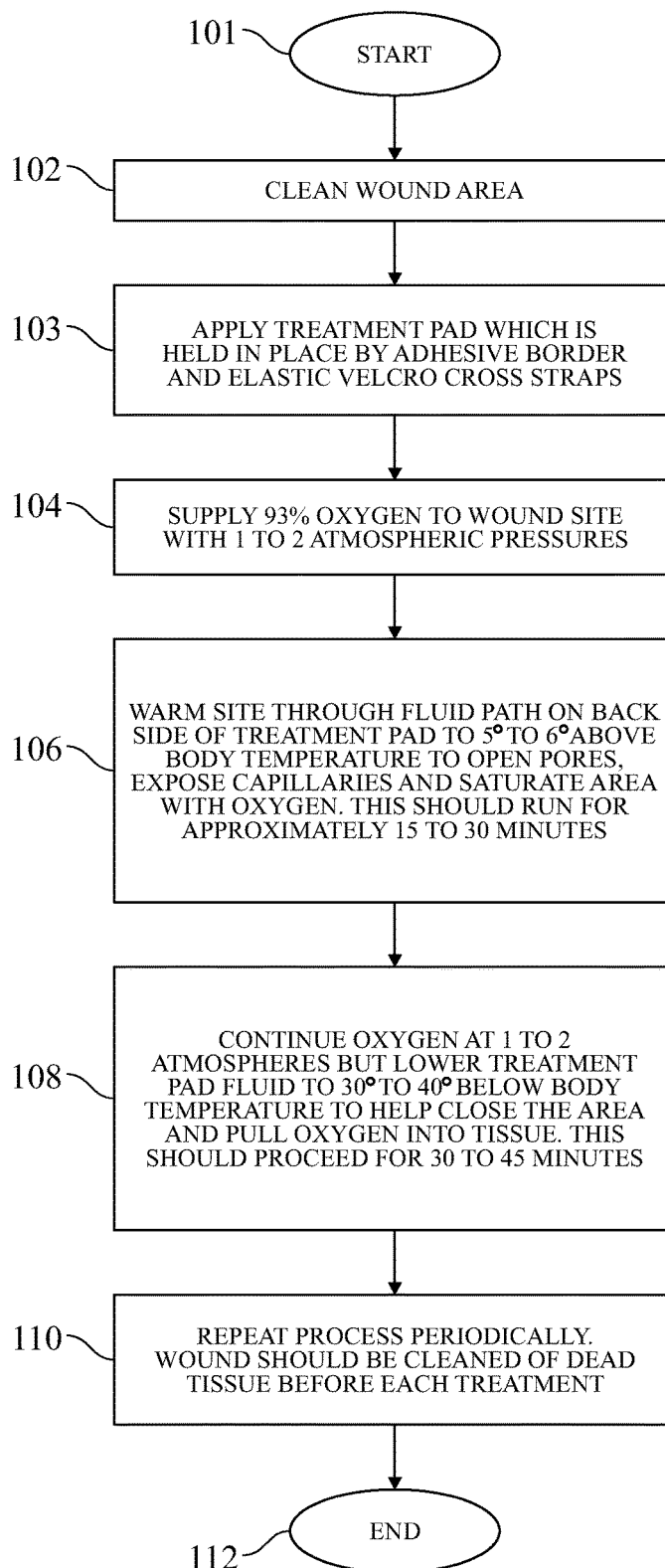


FIG. 2

**FIG. 3**

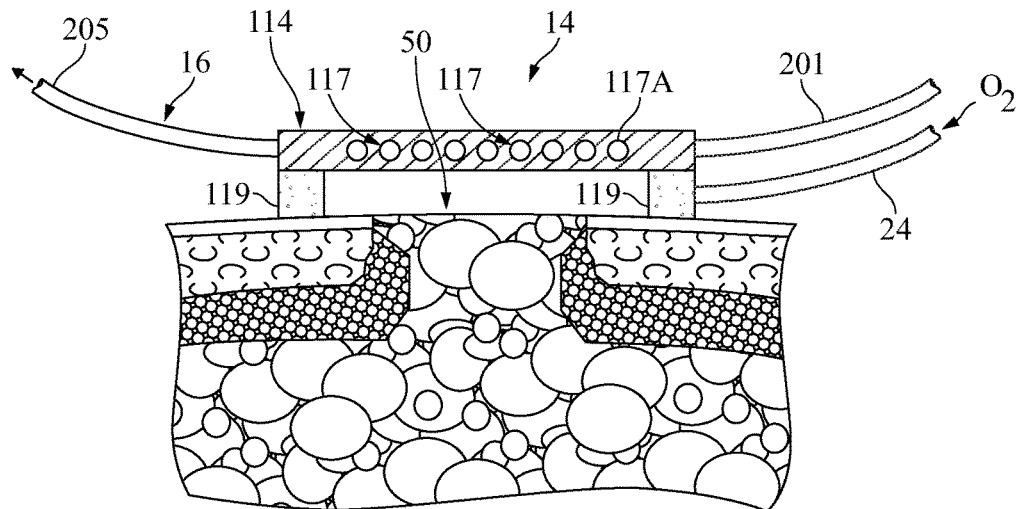


FIG. 4

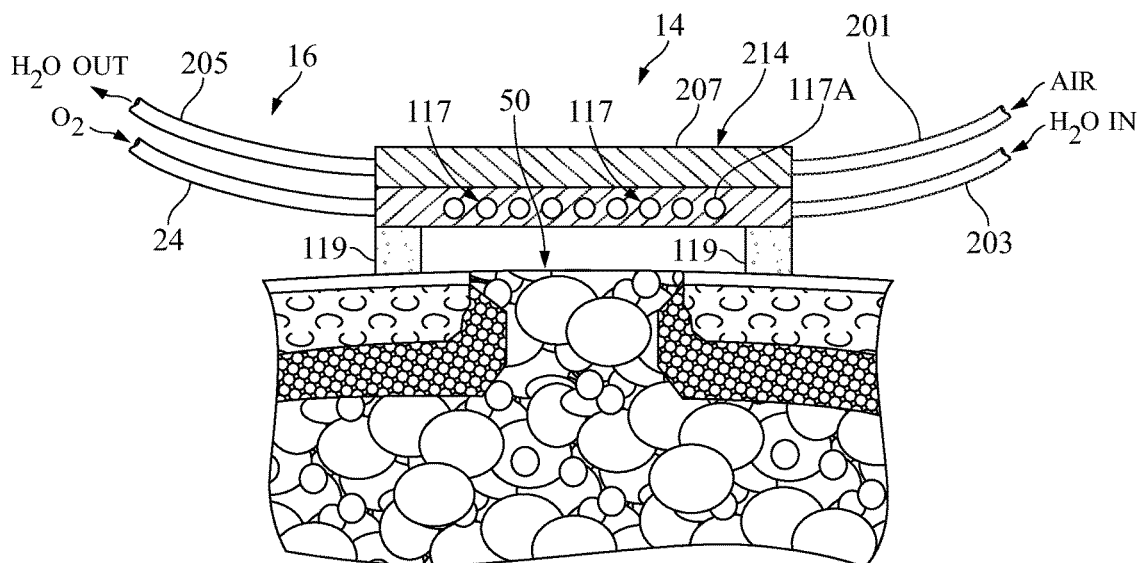


FIG. 5

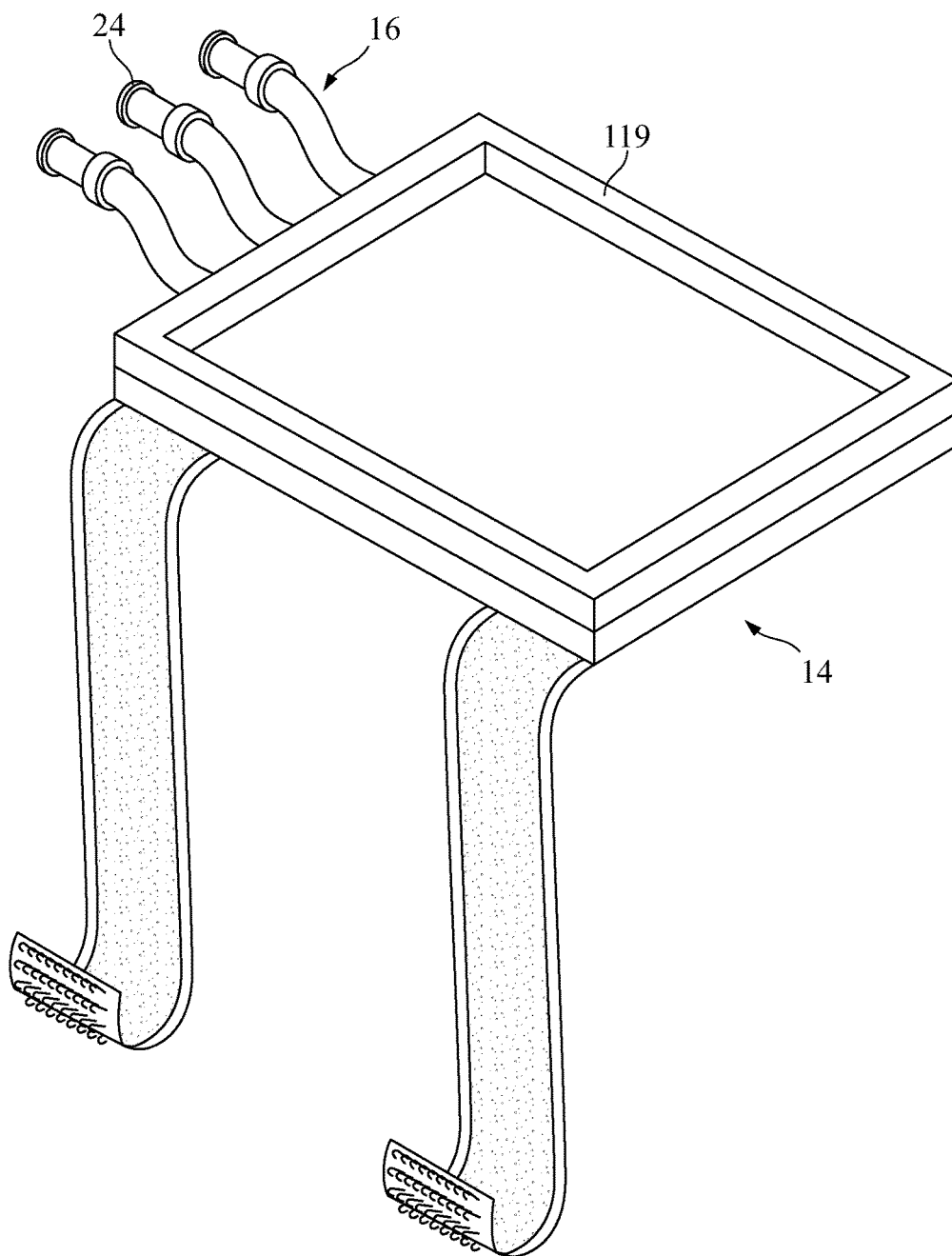


FIG. 6

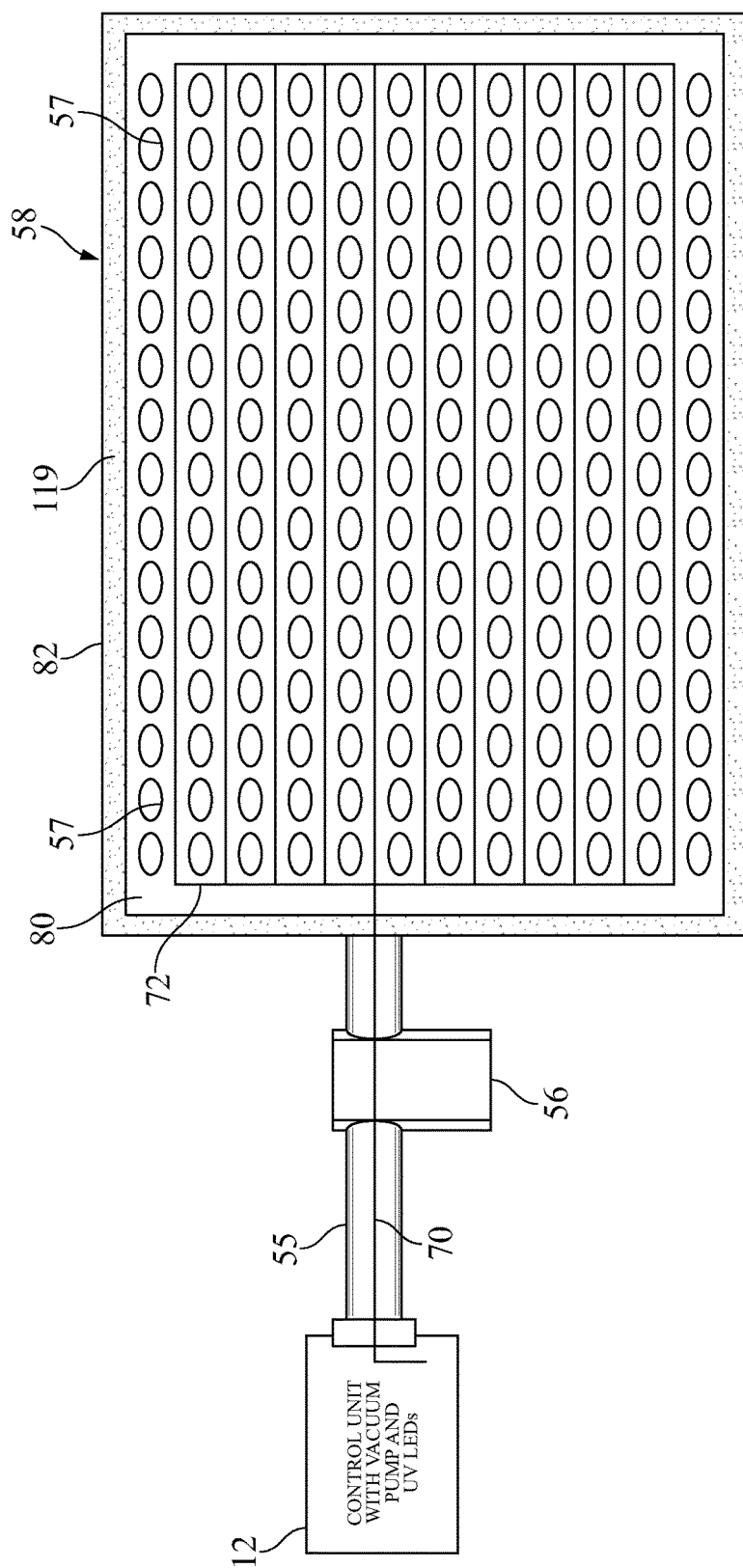
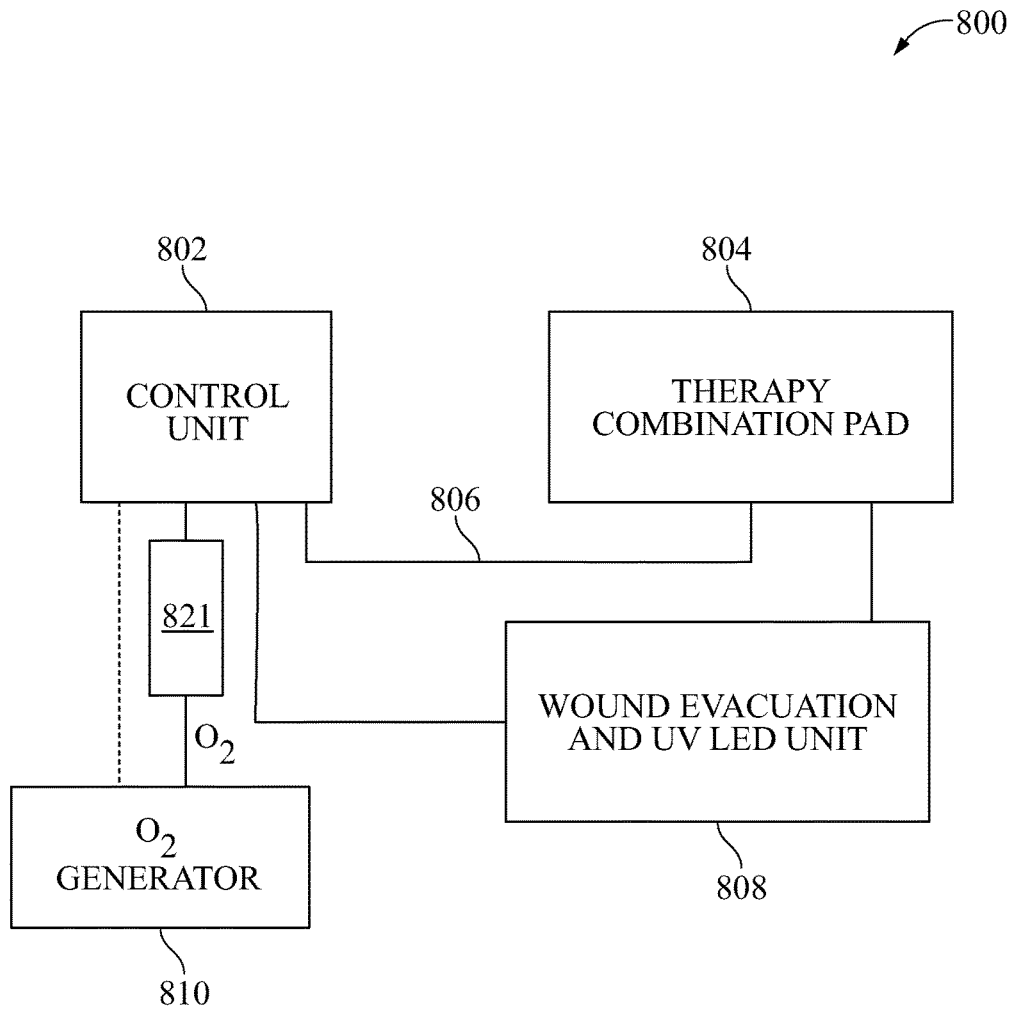


FIG. 7

**FIG. 8A**

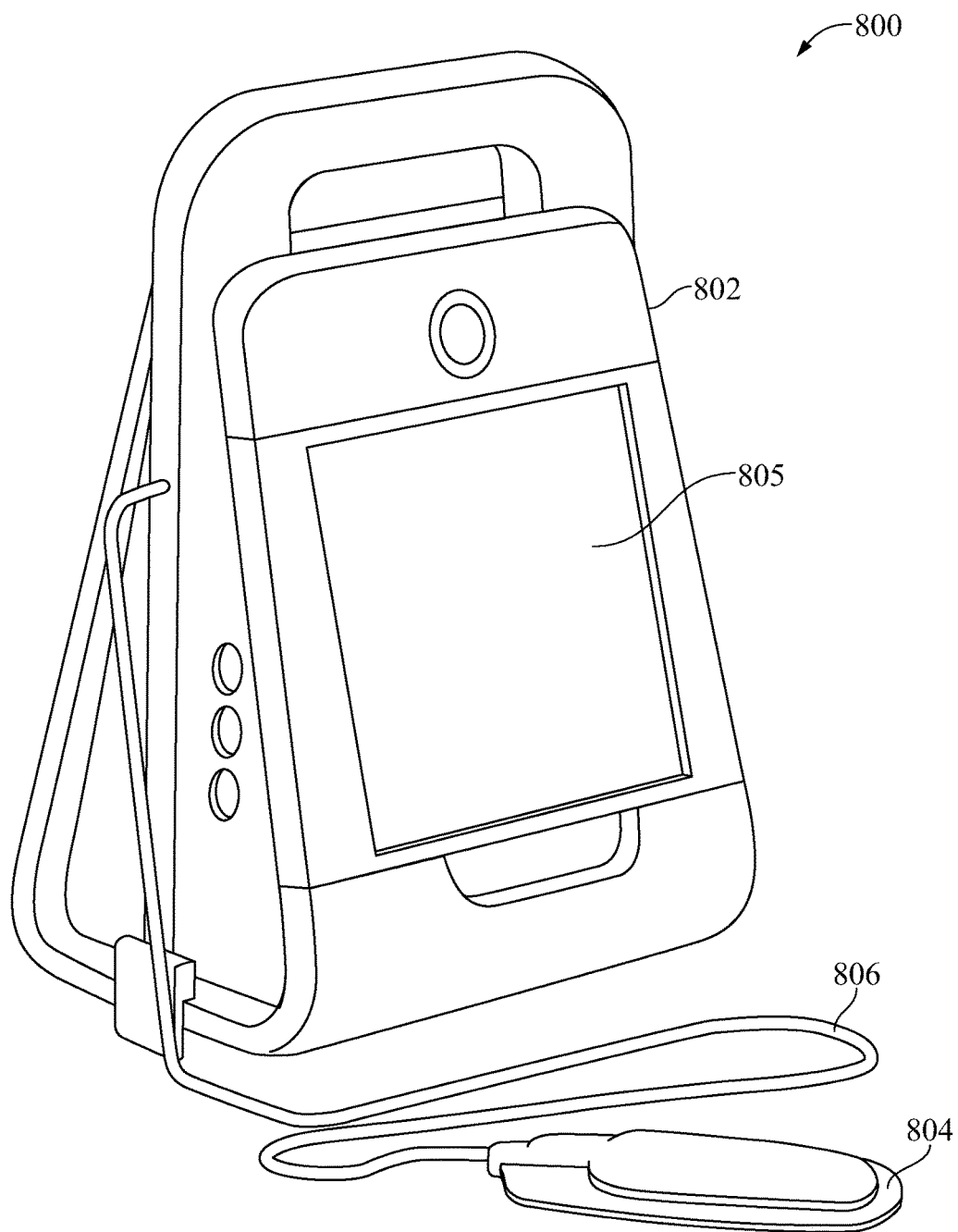


FIG. 8B

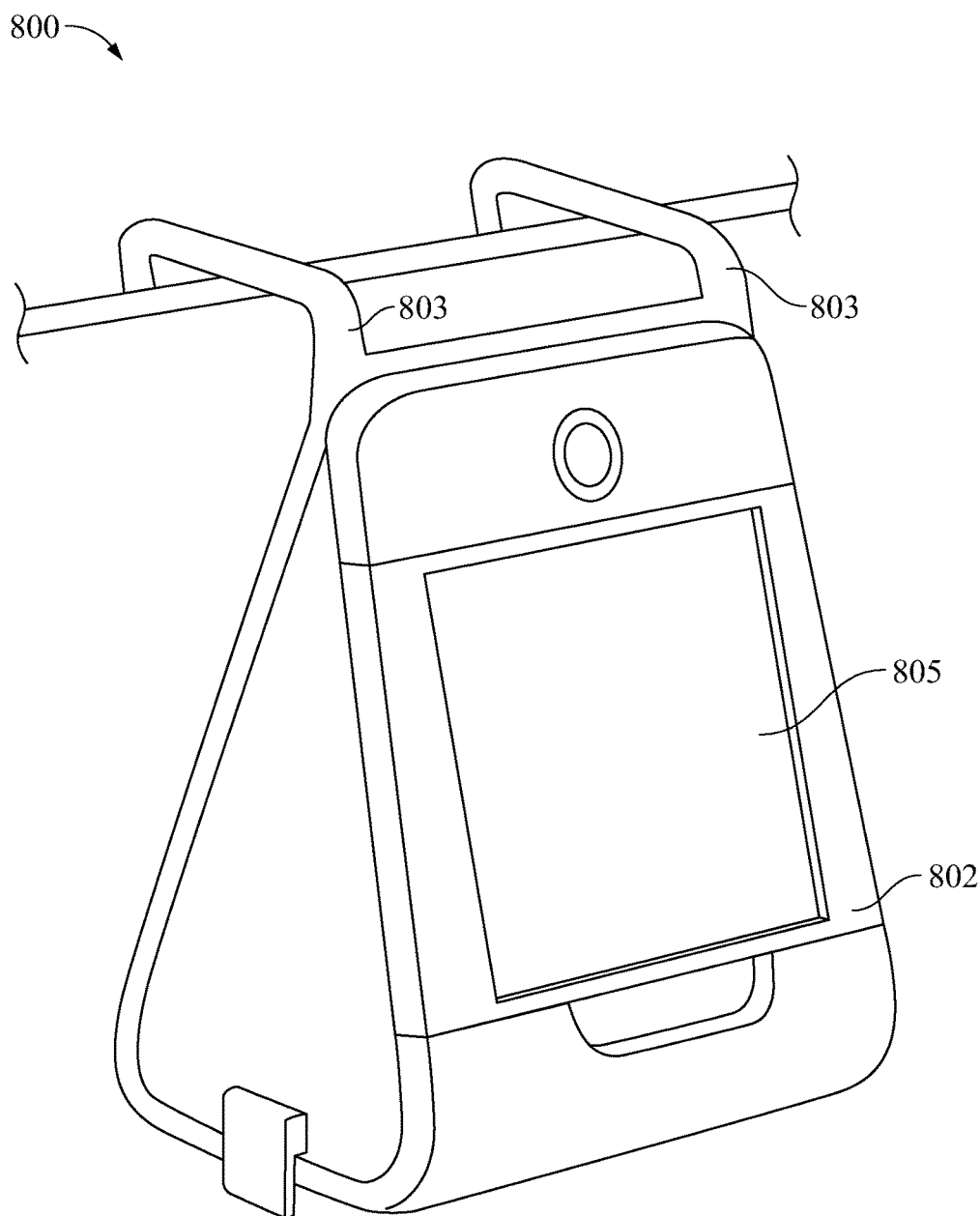


FIG. 8C

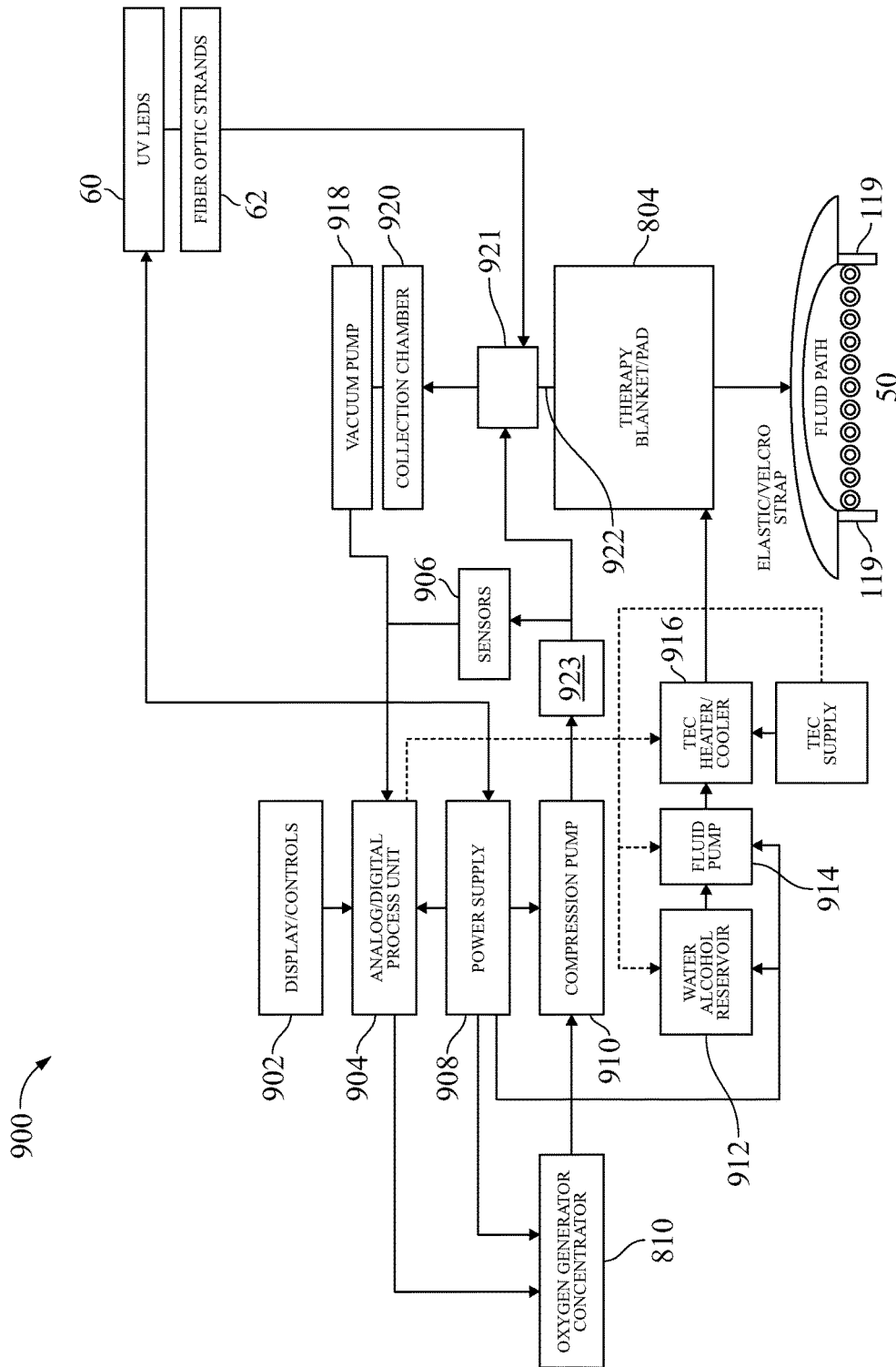


FIG. 9

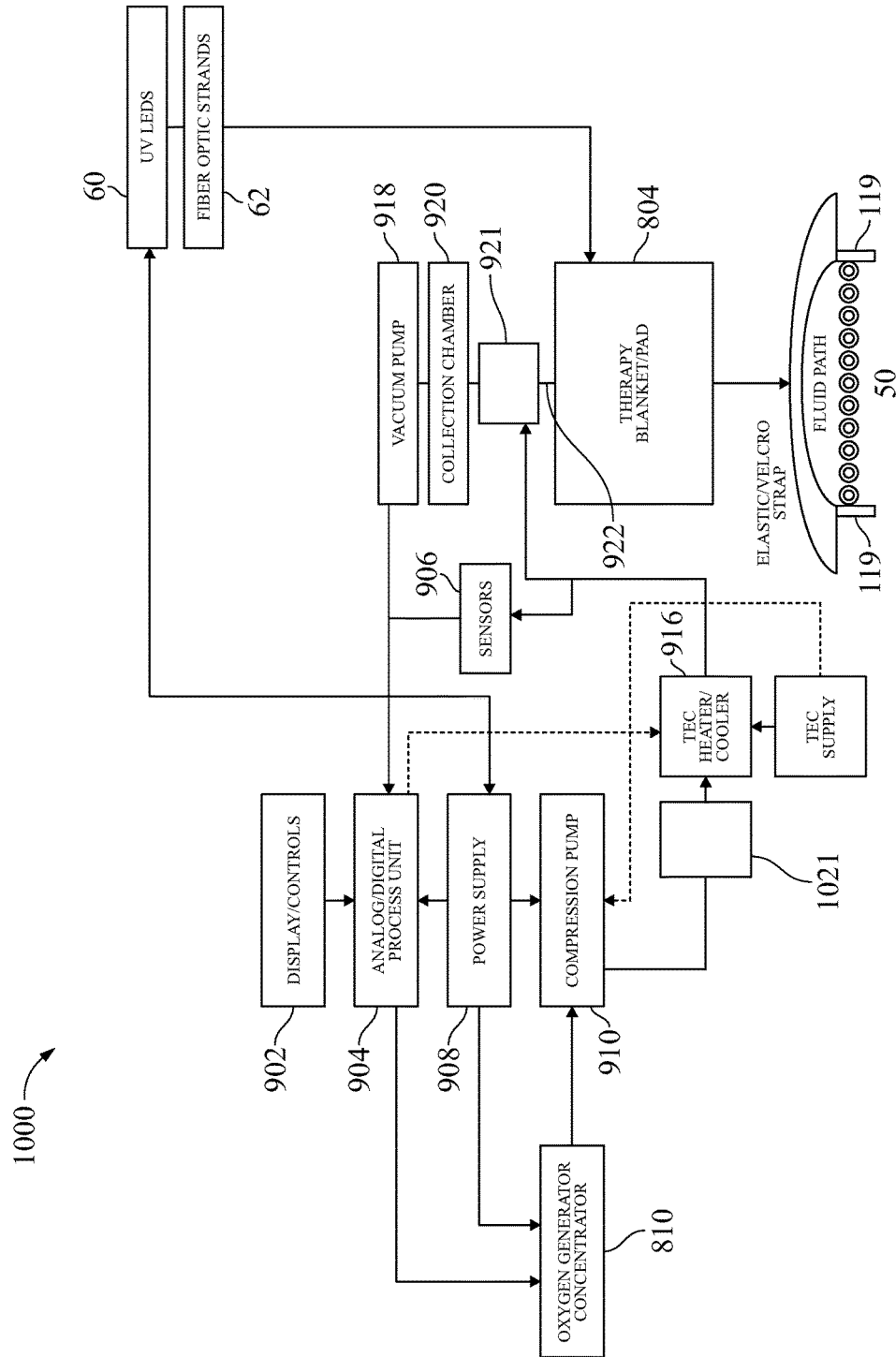


FIG. 10

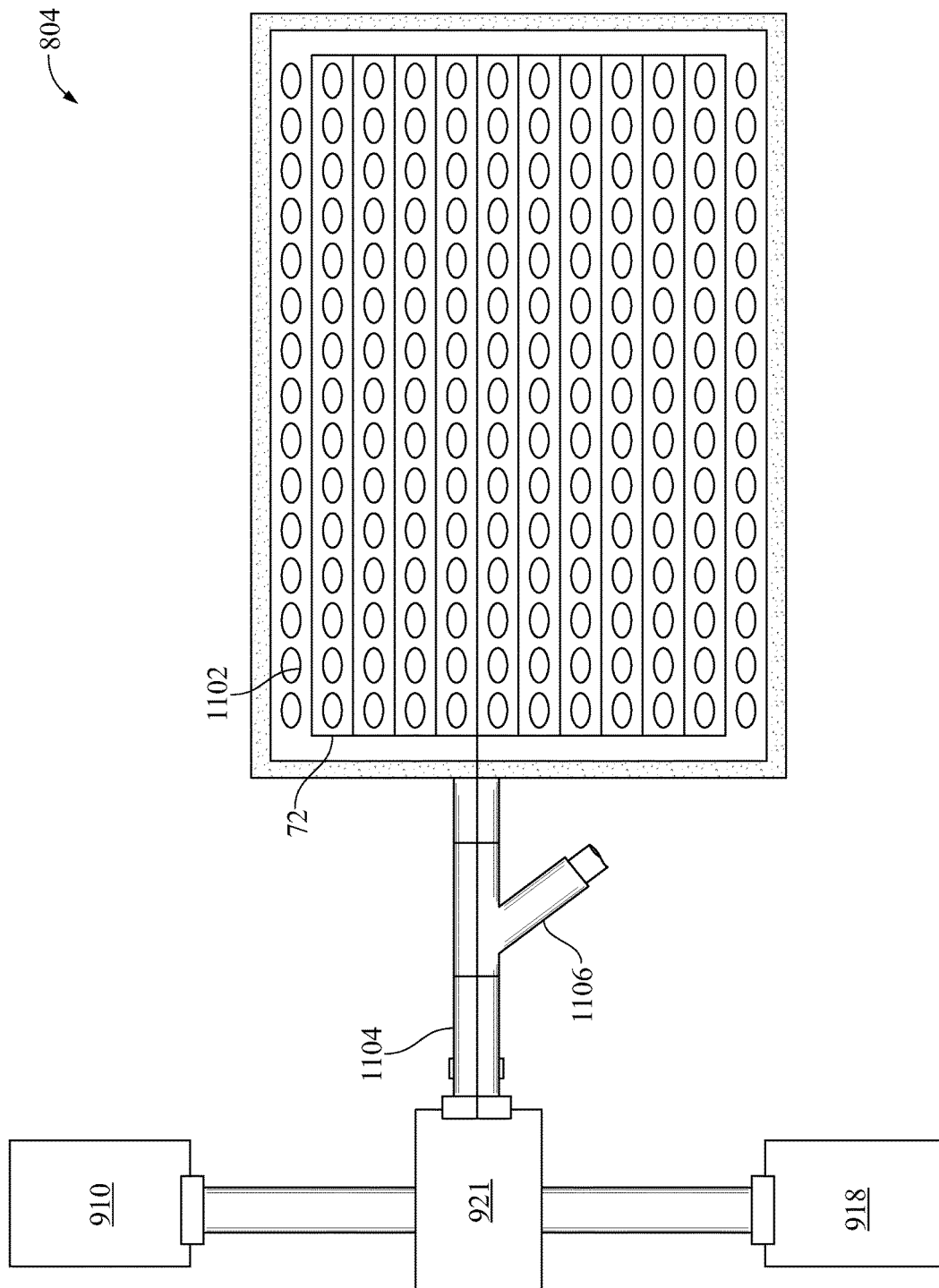


FIG. 11

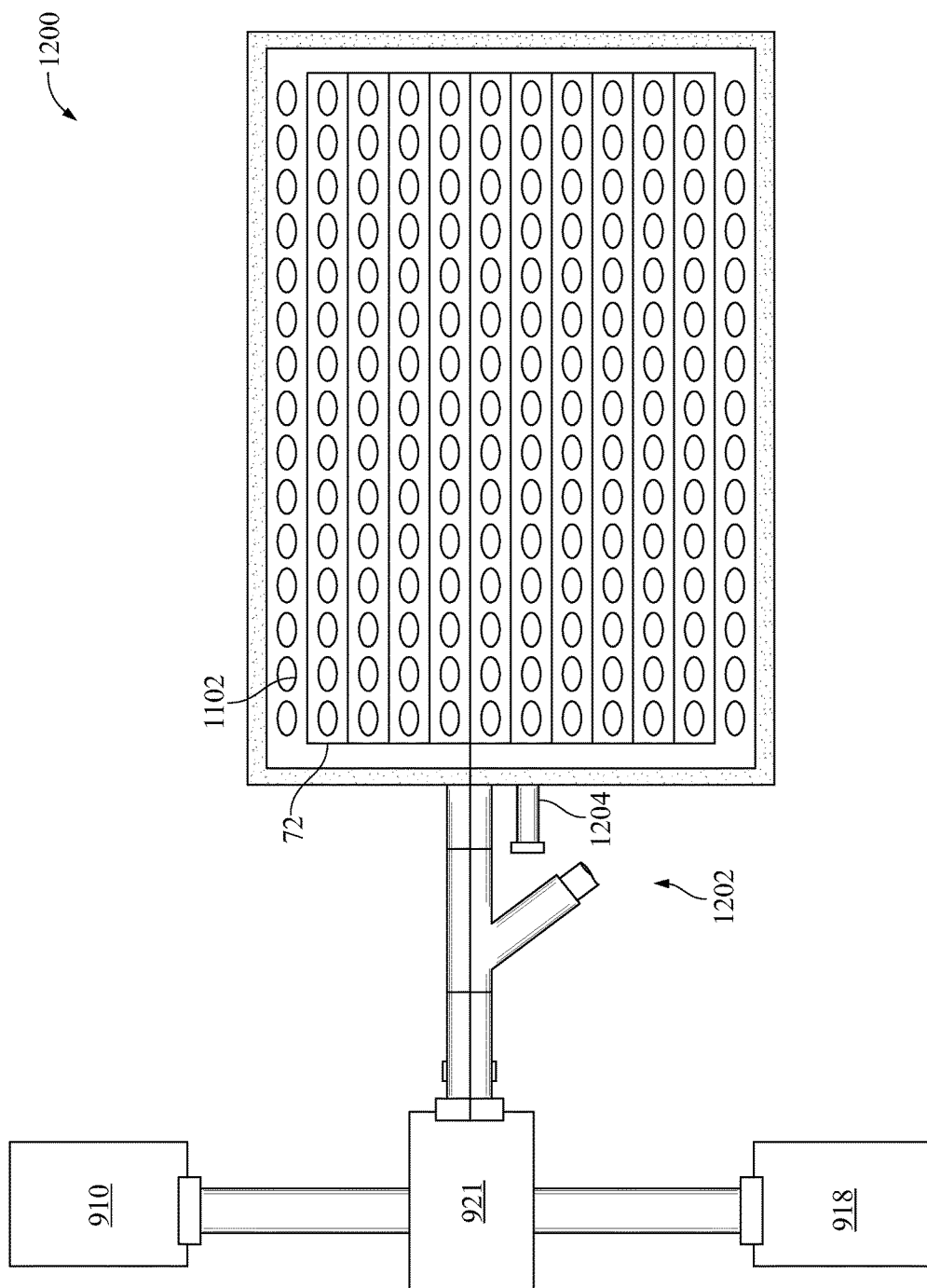


FIG. 12

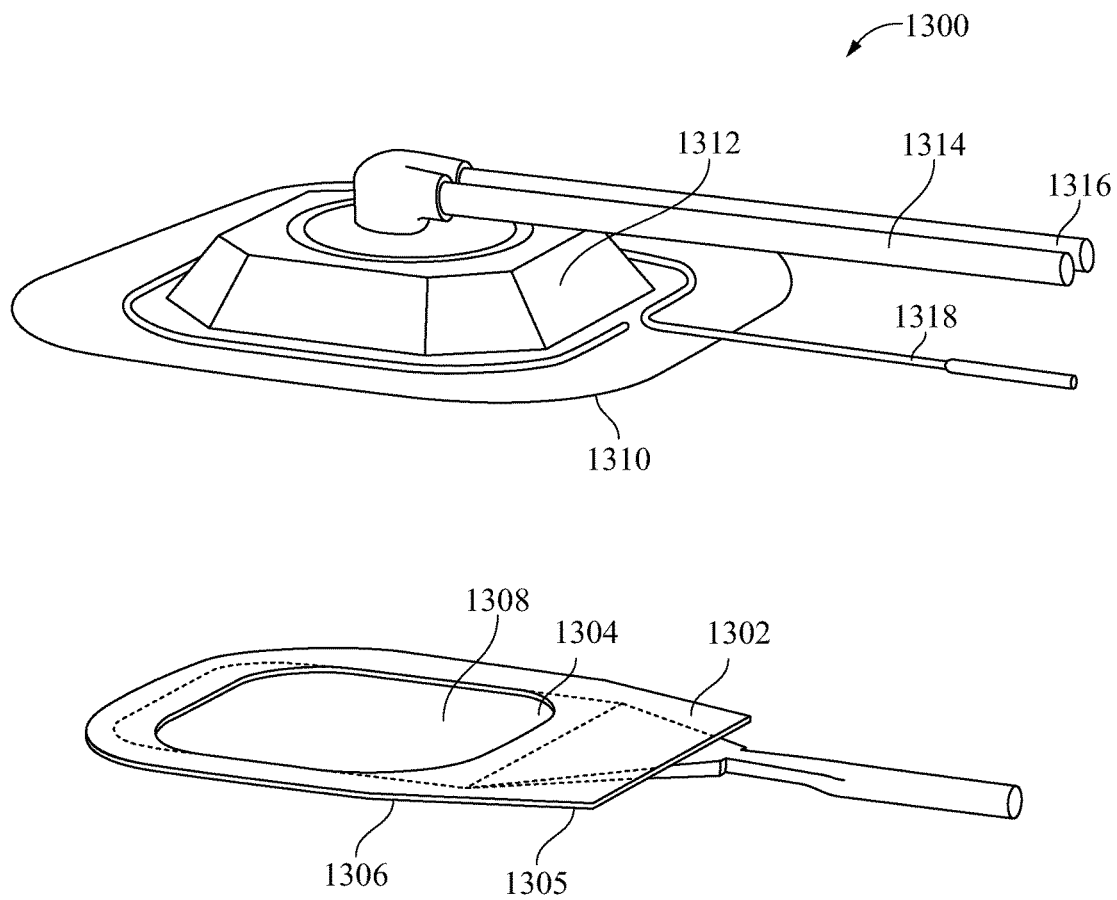


FIG. 13

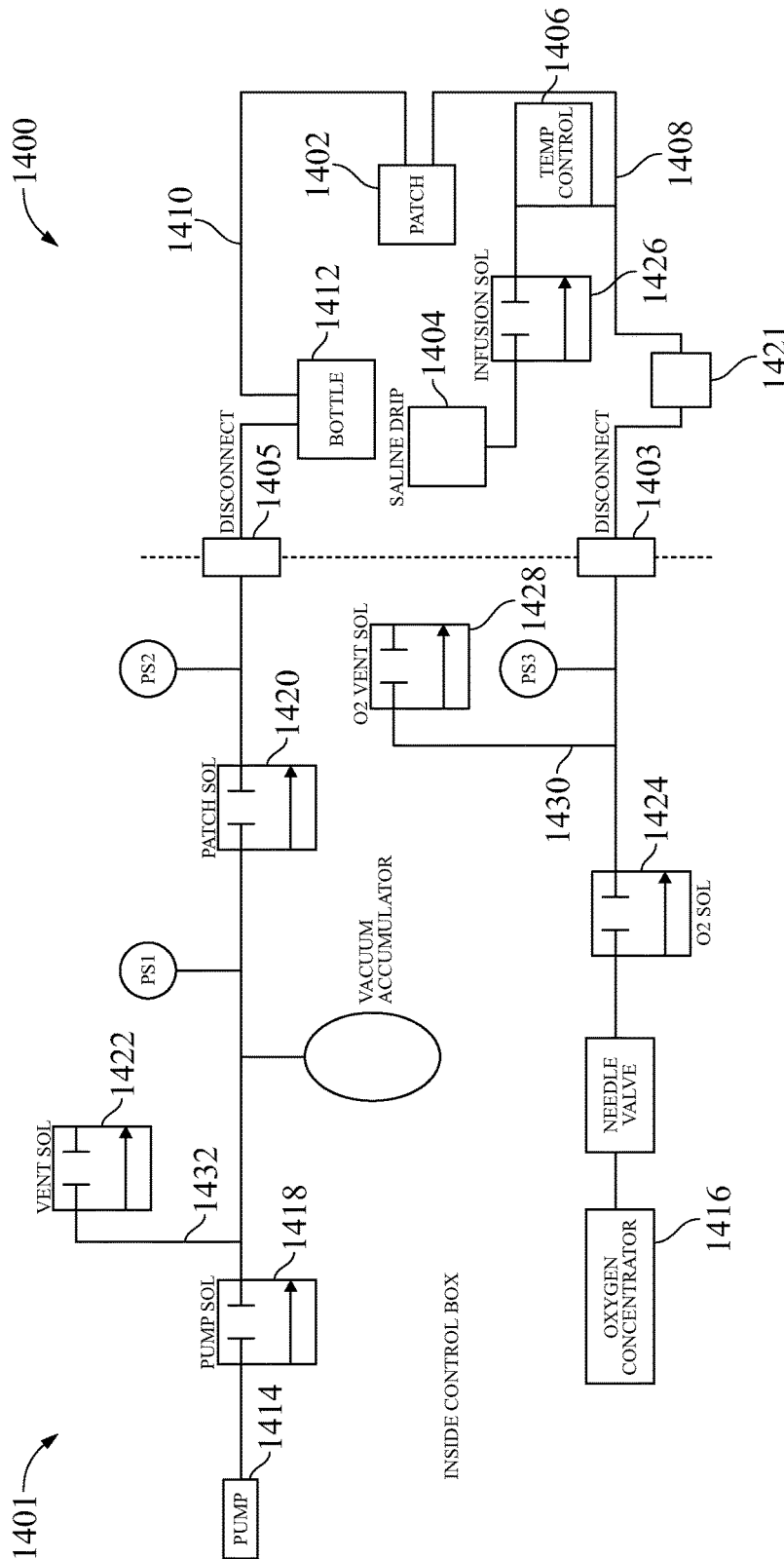
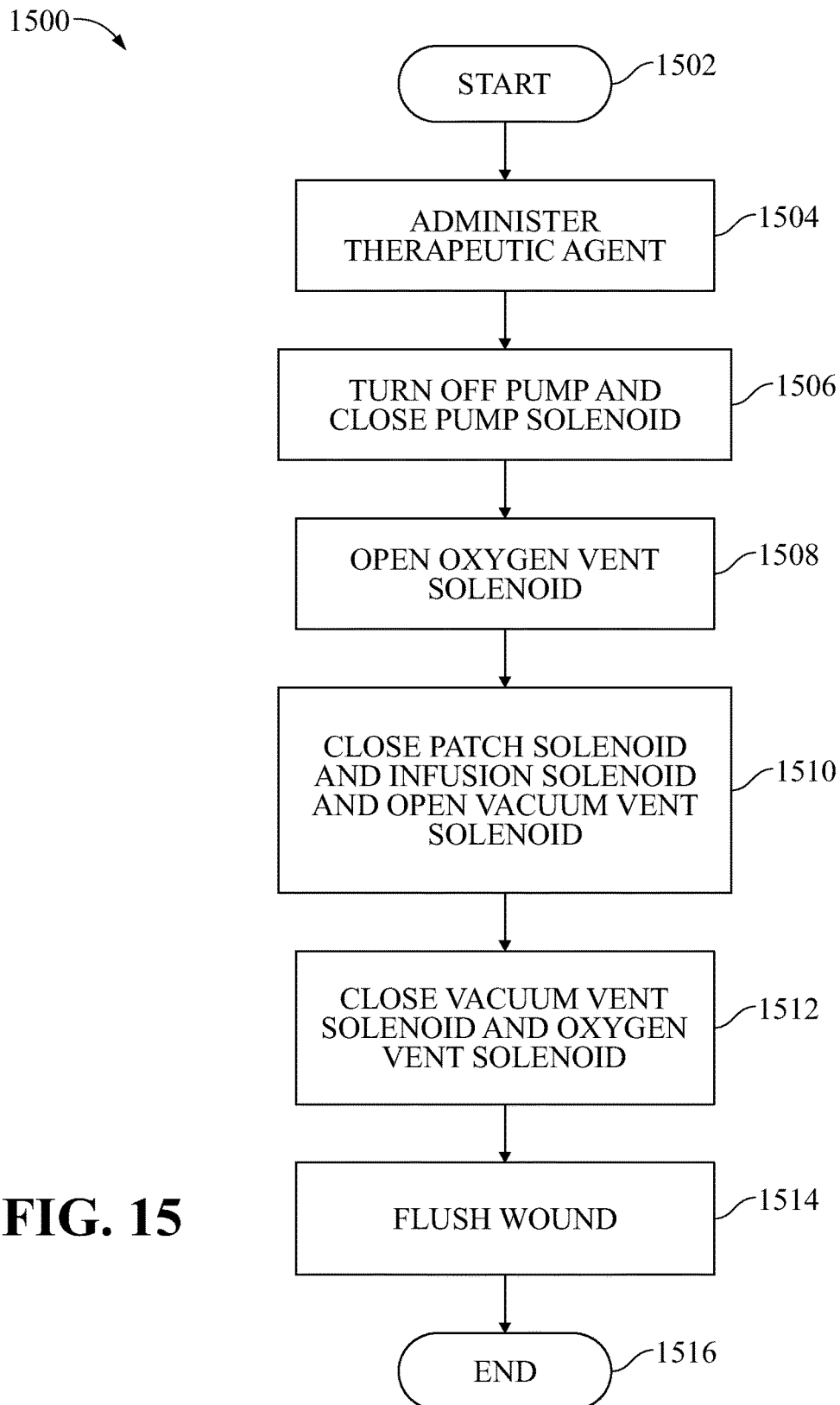


FIG. 14

**FIG. 15**

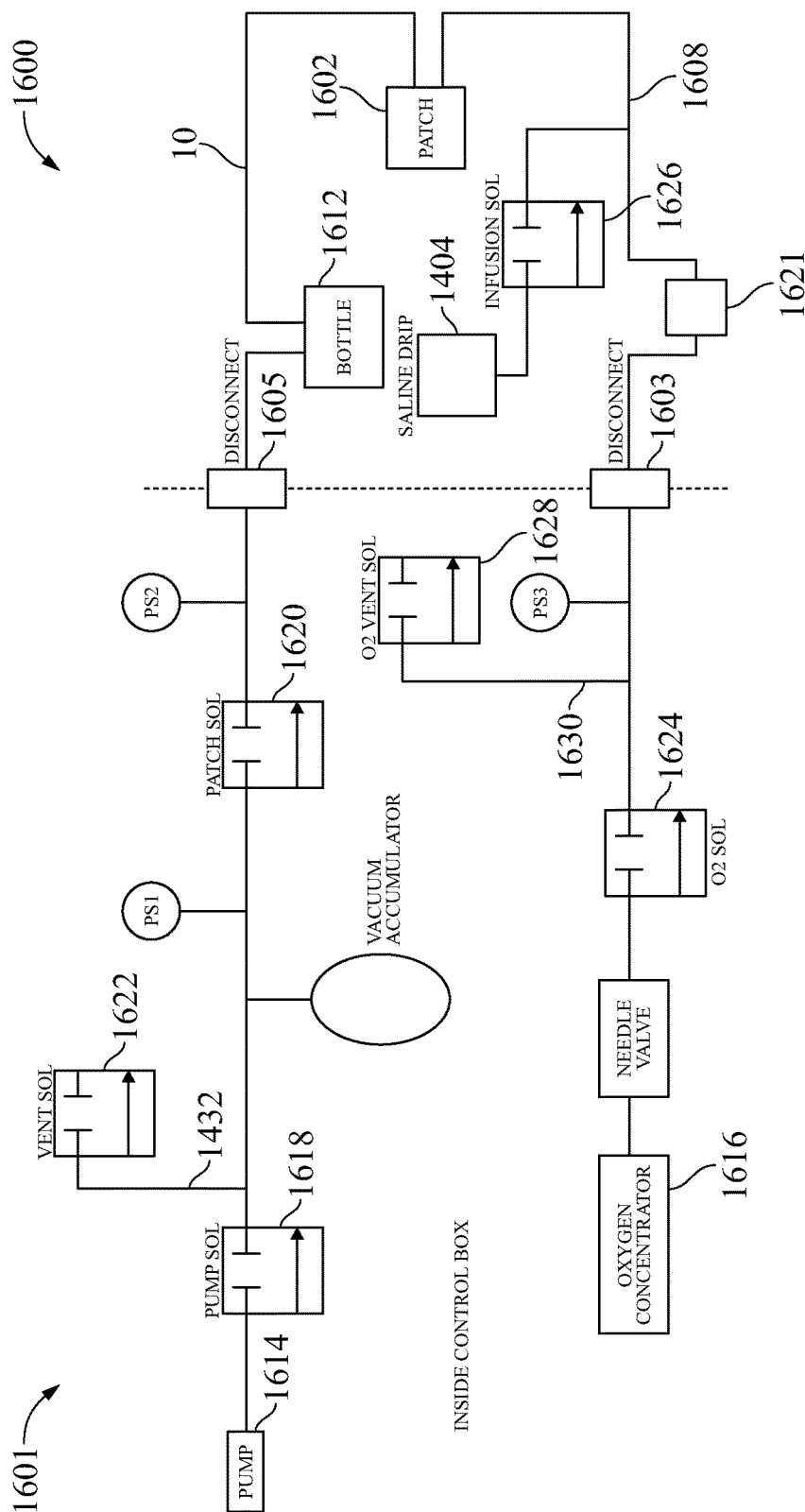


FIG. 16

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WOUND CARE AND INFUSION METHOD AND SYSTEM UTILIZING A THERAPEUTIC AGENT

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/197,324, filed on Mar. 5, 2014. U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/197,324 claims priority to, and incorporates by reference for any purpose the entire disclosure of, U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/776,328, filed Mar. 11, 2013. This application incorporates by reference the entire disclosure of patent application Ser. No. 14/197,324, filed on Mar. 5, 2014, U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/776,328, filed Mar. 11, 2013, U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/359,210, filed Jan. 26, 2012, U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/975,047, filed Oct. 17, 2007, U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/801,662, filed May 9, 2007, U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/894,369, filed Jul. 19, 2004, U.S. Pat. No. 5,097,829, filed Mar. 19, 1990, U.S. Pat. No. 5,989,285, filed Aug. 15, 1996, and U.S. Pat. No. 6,935,409, filed Jun. 8, 1999.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Technical Field

The present invention relates to a wound care method and system with oxygenation and infusion therapy, and more particularly, but not by way of limitation, to a wound care system configured supply therapeutic oxygen and below ambient pressure to a wound area.

Description of the Related Art

An important aspect of patient treatment is wound care. Medical facilities are constantly in need of advanced technology for the cleaning and treatment of skin wounds. The larger the skin wound, the more serious the issues are of wound closure and infection prevention. The rapidity of the migration over the wound of epithelial and subcutaneous tissue adjacent the wound is thus critical. Devices have been developed and/or technically described which address certain aspects of such wound healing. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 6,695,823 to Lina et al. ("Lina") describes a wound therapy device that facilitates wound closure. A vacuum pump is taught for collecting fluids from the wound. WO 93/09727 discloses a solution for wound drainage by utilizing negative pressure over the wound to promote the above references migration of epithelial and subcutaneous tissue over the wound.

In other embodiments, wound treatment is performed using light therapy. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 7,081,128 to Hart et al. ("Hart") describes a method of treating various medical conditions such as, for example, joint inflammation, edema, etc., utilizing an array of Light Emitting Diodes contained on a flexible substrate that may be wrapped around an anatomical feature of the human body. U.S. Pat. No. 6,596,016 to Vreman et al. ("Vreman") discloses a phototherapy garment for an infant having a flexible backing material, a transparent liner, and a flexible printed circuit sheet containing surface-mounted LEDs. The LEDs preferably emit high-intensity blue light, suitable for the treatment of neonatal hyperbilirubinemia. The device may include a portable power supply.

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In other embodiments, wound treatment is performed using oxygen. The use of oxygen for the treatment of skin wounds has been determined to be very beneficial in certain medical instances. The advantages are multitudinous and include rapidity in healing. For this reason, systems have been designed for supplying high concentration of oxygen to wound sites to facilitate the healing process. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,578,022 to Scherson et al. ("Scherson") teaches an oxygen producing bandage and method. One of the benefits cited in Scherson is the ability to modulate a supply of concentrated hyperbaric oxygen to skin wounds. Although oxygen is beneficial in direct application of pre-determined dosages to skin wounds, too much oxygen can be problematic. Oxygen applied to a wound site can induce the growth of blood vessels for stimulating the growth of new skin. Too much oxygen, however, can lead to toxic effects and the cessation of healing of the wound. It would be an advantage, therefore, to maximize the effectiveness of oxygen applied to a wound area by enhancing the absorption rate of oxygen into the skin and tissue fluids. By enhancing the absorption rate of the oxygen in the wound, less exposure time and concomitantly fewer toxic side effects to the endothelial cells surrounding the wound, such as devascularization, occurs. It would be a further advantage, therefore, to utilize existing medical treatment modalities directed toward other aspects of patient therapy to augment oxygenation for wound care.

The present invention provides improvements in wound care by providing multiple wound healing approaches such as, for example, the application of negative pressure over the wound area along with oxygenation of the wound area. By combining an oxygenation modality that is utilized in conjunction, the individual benefits of negative wound pressure and oxygenation treatments can be synergistically enhanced.

SUMMARY

The present invention relates to a wound care method and system with oxygenation and infusion therapy, and more particularly, but not by way of limitation, to a wound care system configured supply therapeutic oxygen and below ambient pressure to a wound area. In one aspect, the present invention relates to a method of treating a wound area. The method includes covering a wound with a patch and coupling the patch to an oxygen generator. The patch is coupled to a vacuum pump. The method includes generating, via the oxygen generator, oxygen and humidifying, via a humidifier, the oxygen. The humidified oxygen is delivered to a wound via a tube associated with the patch and negative pressure is applied, via the vacuum pump, to the patch.

In another aspect, the present invention relates to a wound-care system. The system includes a patch. An infusion tube is coupled to the patch. An oxygen concentrator is coupled to the patch via the infusion tube. A vacuum tube is coupled to the patch. A pump is coupled to the patch via the vacuum tube. A humidifier is coupled to the infusion tube. A first plurality of solenoids are disposed between the patch and the oxygen concentrator. A second plurality of solenoids for isolating the pump from the patch.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A more complete understanding of the method and apparatus of the present invention may be obtained by reference to the following Detailed Description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying Drawings wherein:

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FIG. 1 is an illustration of the wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 2 is a block diagram according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 3 is a flow diagram of a process according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 4 illustrates a side elevational cross sectional view of a therapy blanket/pad according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 5 illustrates a side elevational cross sectional view of a therapy blanket/pad according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 6 is a diagrammatic illustration of a therapy blanket/pad according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 7 is a diagrammatic illustration of a wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 8A is a schematic diagram of a wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 8B is a front perspective view of a wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 8C is a front perspective view of a wound care system illustrating a plurality of hooks according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 9 is a block diagram of a wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 10 is a block diagram of a wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 11 is a diagrammatic illustration of a combination therapy pad according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 12 is a diagrammatic illustration of a combination therapy pad according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 13 is an exploded view of a combination therapy pad according to an exemplary embodiment; and

FIG. 14 is a schematic diagram of a wound-infusion system according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 15 is a flow diagram of a process for administering infusion therapy in conjunction with vacuum therapy and oxygenation therapy according to an exemplary embodiment; and

FIG. 16 is a schematic diagram of a wound-care system according to an exemplary embodiment

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Various embodiments of the present invention will now be described more fully with reference to the accompanying drawings. The invention may, however, be embodied in many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth herein; rather, the embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough and complete, and will fully convey the scope of the invention to those skilled in the art.

Referring first to FIG. 1, there is shown an illustration of one embodiment of a wound care system 10 in accordance with principles of the present invention. The system 10 comprises a control unit 12, a therapy blanket/pad 14 and a plurality of tubular members 16 (to be defined below) connecting the control unit 12 to the therapy blanket/pad 14. In various embodiments, the system 10 may also include a wound evacuation and ultra violet light emitting diode (UV LED) unit 28 and a wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58. The wound evacuation and UV LED unit 28 is connected to the control unit 12 while the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 is connected to the wound evacuation and UV LED unit 28.

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Still referring to FIG. 1, the use of the therapy blanket/pad 14 to the wound site of the patient may be, in one embodiment, subsequent to the cleaning of the wound area of dead tissue by the wound evacuation and, in some embodiments, the UV LED treatment pad 58. In one embodiment, Velcro cross straps may be utilized to secure the therapy blanket/pad 14. A 93% concentration of oxygen has been suggested to be advantageous when applied to a wound site as described herein with one or two atmospheres of pressure. In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, an oxygen generator/concentrator 20 may be utilized within the control unit 12 or may be separate therefrom. In FIG. 1, an oxygen generator/concentrator 20 is shown in association with the control unit 12 by dotted line 22 and an oxygenation gas line 24 shown extending between the control unit 12 and the therapy blanket/pad 14 as a diagrammatic illustration according to an embodiment of the present invention. A humidifier 21 is disposed between the oxygen generator/concentrator 20 and the control unit 12. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 21 may be, for example, a bubbler, a proton-exchange membrane, or any other type of humidifying device as dictated by design requirements. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 21 facilitates delivery of oxygen that is humidified above ambient humidity to the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen delivery is at a partial pressure of approximately 22 mmHg.

In FIG. 1, fiber optic strands (not explicitly shown) direct ultraviolet light from a plurality of LEDs (not explicitly shown) to an array of fiber optic strand ends (not explicitly shown) located on the undersurface of wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58. The control unit 12 may be used to modulate the ultraviolet light to create various patterns of light, different intensities of light, and different durations of light. For example, the control unit 12 may be used to generate pulsed emission of ultraviolet light. The ultraviolet light is capable of penetrating through several layers of skin to destroy infectious bacteria. In one embodiment, not specifically shown herein, the UV LED treatment pad 58 may be provided on the therapy blanket/pad 14. According to exemplary embodiments, the ultraviolet light from the plurality of LEDs located on the undersurface of wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 destroys a wide variety of microorganisms such as, for example, bacteria which causes skin infections. In addition, the ultraviolet light from the plurality of LEDs improves wound healing along with cell and bone growth. Furthermore, the use of LEDs in light therapy is safe, non-invasive, drug-free and therapeutic.

Referring now to FIG. 2, there is a block diagram 200 illustrating the flow of oxygenation gas as a transfer fluid according to an embodiment of the present invention. As set forth in the block diagram 200, a control unit display 30 is provided in conjunction with an analog/digital processing unit 32. A plurality of sensors 34 are, in various embodiments, utilized in conjunction with the processing unit 32 for control of transfer fluids to the therapy blanket/pad 14 as well as the oxygen delivery thereto. The oxygen generator/concentrator 20 is connected to a power supply 36, which power supply 36, also powers the processing unit 32. The oxygen generated from the oxygen generator/concentrator 20 is then pumped through compression pump 38 and the humidifier 21 before delivery to the therapy blanket/pad 14. It should be noted that an oxygen supply may also be used. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 21 is disposed between the oxygen generator/concentrator 20 and the therapy blanket/pad 14. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 2, the humidifier 21 is disposed between the compression

pump 28 and the therapy blanket/pad 14; however, in other embodiments, the humidifier 21 may be disposed between the oxygen generator/concentrator 20 and the compression pump 38. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 21 facilitates delivery of oxygen that is humidified above ambient humidity to the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen delivery is at a partial pressure of approximately 22 mmHg.

Referring still to FIG. 2, a water/alcohol reservoir 40 is shown in fluid flow communication with fluid pump 42 and, in various embodiments, a Thermo Electric Cooler (TEC) heater/cooler 44. The TEC heater/cooler 44 may be controlled by the processing unit 32 and a TEC supply 46 is likewise shown. Adjacent the TEC supply 46 is illustrated a diagrammatical schematic of a treatment chamber 50 defined beneath the therapy blanket/pad 14 wherein the treatment chamber 50 is thermally exposed to the thermal fluid by the fluid path therein illustrated. The adhesive attachment edges 52 therein shown likewise define the treatment chamber space 50 between the therapy blanket/pad 14 and the wound site to allow for the flow of the oxygenation gas therein.

Referring still to FIG. 2, there is shown a vacuum pump 59 powered by the power supply 36. A collection chamber 56 is connected to the vacuum pump 59 and to a wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58. The wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 is used prior to the therapy blanket/pad 14, in one embodiment of the present invention, for cleaning the wound area in preparation for oxygenation in conjunction with thermal therapy in accordance with the present invention.

Referring still to FIG. 2, there is shown a plurality of ultraviolet LEDs 60 and fiber optic strands 62, which are interoperably connected to the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58. The wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 is used prior to the therapy blanket/pad 14, in one embodiment of the present invention, for removing bacteria from the wound area in preparation for oxygenation in accordance with an embodiment. According to exemplary embodiments, ultraviolet light from the plurality of LEDs 60 destroys a wide variety of microorganisms such as, for example, bacteria which causes skin infections. In addition, the ultraviolet light from the plurality of LEDs 60 improves wound healing along with cell and bone growth. Furthermore, the use of the plurality of LEDs 60 in light therapy is safe, non-invasive, drug-free and therapeutic.

According to exemplary embodiments, the ultraviolet light from the plurality of LEDs 60 is in the range of approximately 200 to 450 nanometers and higher, and energy levels of up to 35,000 microwatt seconds/cm², which are necessary to eliminate or destroy most microorganisms such as bacteria, spores, algae and viruses. Most bacteria can be destroyed at ultra violet energies of from about 3,000 to about 5,000 microwatt-seconds/cm² while mold spores may require energies in the 20,000 to 35,000 mW-seconds/cm².

Referring now to FIG. 3 there is shown a flow diagram of a process 300 according to an embodiment. The process 300 starts at step 101. At step 102, the wound area is cleaned of dead tissue, any undesirable fluids, and bacteria by applying the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58. The wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 is used prior to the therapy blanket/pad 14 for removing bacteria from the wound area in preparation for oxygenation in accordance with the present invention. According to exemplary embodiments, the ultraviolet light from the plurality of LEDs located on the undersurface of wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 destroys a wide variety of

microorganisms such as, for example, bacteria which causes skin infections. In addition, the ultraviolet light from the plurality of LEDs improves wound healing along with cell and bone growth. Furthermore, the use of LEDs in light therapy is safe, non-invasive, drug-free and therapeutic.

At step 103, the therapy blanket/pad 14 is applied to the wound area. The therapy blanket/pad 14 is held in position by an adhesive border and, in one embodiment, elastic Velcro cross straps. At step 104, according to an embodiment, an oxygenation gas comprising on the order of 93% concentration of oxygen gas is delivered to the wound site with one to two atmospheric pressures. The numbers as set forth and shown are exemplary and other oxygenation concentrations as well as pressures are contemplated in various embodiments. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 21 facilitates delivery of oxygen that is humidified above ambient humidity to the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen delivery is at a partial pressure of approximately 22 mmHg.

In step 106, the site is warmed through the fluid path herein shown on the back side of the therapy blanket/pad 14 up to approximately 5 to approximately 6 degrees above the body temperature of the patient. Warming allows the pores of the patient's skin to open, exposing capillaries therein. The capillaries of the skin are then saturated with oxygen. In one period of time herein described, a warming period of approximately 15 to approximately 30 minutes is recommended. At step 108, oxygenation is continued at one to two atmospheres and the therapy blanket/pad fluid is lowered to approximately 30 to approximately 40 degrees below body temperatures. Cooling closes the pores of the wound area and pulls oxygen into the underlying tissue. Cooling then proceeds for approximately 30 to approximately 45 minutes in accordance with an embodiment. At step 110, the process 300 may be repeated periodically and the wound area may be cleaned of dead tissue before each treatment. At step 112, the process 300 ends.

FIG. 4 is a side elevational, cross sectional view of one embodiment of the therapy blanket/pad 14. In an embodiment, the therapy blanket/pad 14 is constructed with a single bladder 114 where, in various embodiments, thermal fluid flow may be provided. The tubular members 16 are coupled to the therapy blanket/pad 14. The therapy blanket/pad is fabricated with a circuitous flow path therein for thermal fluid flow. The circuitous flow path may be tubular in form, or simply a path within therapy blanket/pad 14 defined by flow channels. What is shown is a path 117 within therapy blanket/pad 14. The path 117 is shown with tubular ends 117A, for example, illustrating that thermal fluid flows therein for thermal treatment of the underlying wound area. Again, the path 117 may not be of tubular form and may have a variety of shapes and fabrication techniques well known in the art of therapy pads.

According to an exemplary embodiment, the therapy blanket/pad 14 is separated from the patient's skin by adhesive strips 119 having a thickness of, for example, 1/8 inch. The therapy blanket/pad 14 (not drawn to scale) injects humidified oxygen into the treatment chamber 50. The injection of humidified oxygen helps treat the wound area and any stasis zones therein where tissue swelling has restricted flow of blood to tissues within the wound area. It is well known that, without sufficient blood flow, the epithelial and subcutaneous tissues referenced above receive less oxygen and are less able to migrate over the wound area to promote healing. By utilizing the embodiments disclosed herein, oxygenation is enhanced and the problems associated with such conditions are mitigated.

FIG. 5 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the therapy and oxygenation treatment pad of FIG. 4. A dual bladder 214 is thus provided where air may be applied to second bladder 207 atop the path 117, also represented by the “tubular” ends 117A shown for purposes of example only. In this manner, select compression therapy may be afforded in conjunction with the oxygenation treatment. In that regard, air inlet tube 201 is connected to the second bladder 207. Both FIGS. 4 and 5 show oxygen tube 24 for feeding humidified oxygen to the treatment chamber 50, with tube 203, which in some embodiments, allows thermal fluid into conduits 117 with tube 205 allowing thermal fluid return to control unit 12 of FIG. 1. FIG. 5 further illustrates the advantages of FIG. 4 with the ability for either compression or sequenced compression as referenced above.

Referring now to FIG. 6, there is shown a diagrammatic illustration of the therapy blanket/pad 14 of FIGS. 1 and 4. The tubular members 16 for, in some embodiments, thermal fluid flow and the tube 24 for humidified oxygen flow are clearly seen. The adhesive border 119 is likewise shown.

FIG. 7 is diagrammatic illustration of a wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 according to an embodiment of the present invention. In this embodiment, the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 contains an array of fiber optic strand 72 to project ultraviolet light onto a wound area (not explicitly shown). In a typical embodiment, the fiber optic strands 72 may be cleaved side emitting fibers. The wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 also contains an array of unique removal ports 57 that may be used to remove any undesirable fluid from the wound area. The wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 further contains a non-tissue adhesive service 80 which contains both the fiber optic strand array 72 and the unique removal ports 57. An adhesive circumference 82 is located around the periphery of the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 to allow for a seal to be formed around the wound area. The seal, in conjunction with the removal ports 57, allows a negative pressure to form over the wound area. Negative pressure facilitates removal undesirable tissues from the wound area. The wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 is connected to a control unit 12. The control unit 12 contains a vacuum pump (not shown) and a plurality of ultraviolet LEDs (not explicitly shown). The vacuum pump is connected to the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 via a vacuum line 55. A collection chamber 56 is positioned between the vacuum pump and the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 to intercept and store undesirable fluids, tissues, and the like that are removed from the wound area as a result of negative pressure applied to the wound area with the vacuum pump. The plurality of ultraviolet LEDs transmit ultraviolet light through the fiber optic strands 70 to the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58, where the fiber optic strands 70 are then dispersed throughout the wound evacuation and UV LED treatment pad 58 to project ultraviolet light onto the wound area. Energy delivered by the plurality of LEDs enhances cellular metabolism, accelerates repair and replenishment of damaged skin cells, as well as stimulates production of collagen which is the foundation of a healthy and smooth skin. Light therapy is non-ablative, non-invasive, and painless.

FIG. 8A is a schematic diagram of a wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment. A wound care system 800 includes a control unit 802, a combination therapy pad 804, and a plurality of tubular members 806

associated with the control unit 802 and connected to the combination therapy pad 804. In various embodiments, the wound evacuation and UV-LED unit 808 and the control unit 802 are contained in a single housing; however, in various alternative embodiments, the wound evacuation and UV-LED unit 808 and the control unit 802 may not be in a single housing and are independent devices.

Still referring to FIG. 8A, use of the combination therapy pad 804 incorporates evacuation therapy for wound cleaning with oxygenation therapy known to promote healing. In various embodiments, Velcro cross straps are used to secure the combination therapy pad 804. An oxygen generator/concentrator 810 is utilized to provide, for example, a 93% concentration of oxygen to a wound site via the combination therapy pad 804. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 and the control unit 802 are separate devices; however, in other embodiments, the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 and the control unit 802 are contained in a single housing. A humidifier 821 is disposed between the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 and the control unit 802. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 821 may be, for example, a bubbler, a proton-exchange membrane, or any other type of humidifying device as dictated by design requirements. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 821 facilitates delivery of oxygen that is humidified above ambient humidity to the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen delivery is at a partial pressure of approximately 22 mmHg.

Still referring to FIG. 8A, fiber optic strands (not explicitly shown) direct ultraviolet light from a plurality of LEDs (not explicitly shown) located in the wound evacuation and UV-LED unit 808 to an array of fiber optic strands (not explicitly shown) located on an undersurface of the combination therapy pad 804. The control unit 802 may be used to modulate the ultraviolet light to create, for example, various patterns of light, different intensities of light, and different durations of light. For example, in various embodiments, the control unit 802 is used to produce pulsed emission of the ultraviolet light.

FIG. 8B is a front perspective view of a wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment. The wound care system 800 includes the control unit 802, the combination therapy pad 804, and the plurality of tubular members 806 connecting the combination therapy pad 804 to the control unit 802. A user interface 805 is disposed on a front surface of the control unit 802. In a typical embodiment, the user interface 805 allows a user to control various parameters of wound care-treatment including, for example, oxygen concentration, oxygen pressure and, if applicable, temperature, and ultra-violet light intensity. The user interface 805 may be pivoted relative to the control unit 802 to provide a favorable viewing angle. In a typical embodiment, the user interface 805 may be, for example a touch screen interface; however, in other embodiments, the user interface 805 may be, for example, a plurality of controls or any other user interface. In various embodiments, Velcro cross straps (not shown) may be used to secure the combination therapy pad 804.

FIG. 8C is a front perspective view of the wound care system of FIG. 8A illustrating a plurality of foldable hooks. The wound care system 800 includes a plurality of foldable hooks 803 disposed, for example, along a top of the control unit 802. In a typical embodiment, the plurality of foldable hooks 803 may be utilized to hang the control unit 802 from, for example, a hospital bed.

FIG. 9 is a block diagram of a wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment. In a wound-care

system 900, a control unit display 902 is provided in conjunction with a processing unit 904. In a typical embodiment, the processing unit 904 is an analog/digital processing unit. In various embodiments, a plurality of sensors 906 may be utilized in conjunction with the processing unit 904 for control of heat transfer fluids to a combination therapy pad 804. In various embodiments, the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 is connected to a power supply 908. The power supply 908 also powers the processing unit 904. Oxygen generated by the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 is pumped through a compression pump 910, a humidifier 923, and a pressure switch 921 before being delivered to the combination therapy pad 804. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 923 is disposed between the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 and the therapy blanket/pad 804. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 9, the humidifier 923 is disposed between the compression pump 910 and the therapy blanket/pad 804; however, in other embodiments, the humidifier 923 may be disposed between the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 and the compression pump 910. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 923 facilitates delivery of oxygen that is humidified above ambient humidity to the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen delivery is at a partial pressure of approximately 22 mmHg.

Still referring to FIG. 9, in various embodiment, a water/alcohol reservoir 912 may be in fluid communication with a fluid pump 914 and a thermoelectric cooler 916. The thermoelectric cooler 916 is controlled by the processing unit 904. In a typical embodiment, a vacuum pump 918 is powered by the power supply 908. A collection chamber 920 is fluidly connected to the vacuum pump 918 and the pressure switch 921. The pressure switch 921 is fluidly coupled to the combination therapy pad 804. In a typical embodiment, oxygen therapy and vacuum therapy are each administered to the combination therapy pad 804 through a common port 922. In a typical embodiment, the pressure switch 921 is capable of adjusting the combination therapy pad 804 between vacuum treatment and oxygenation therapy.

FIG. 10 is a block diagram of a wound care system according to an exemplary embodiment. In a typical embodiment, a wound care system 1000 is similar in construction to the arrangement described above with respect to FIG. 9. However, the wound care system 1000 does not include a water/alcohol reservoir or a fluid pump as shown in FIG. 9. In a various embodiment, the thermoelectric cooler 916 may be in fluid communication with the compression pump 910. Thus, thermal therapy may be supplied to the combination therapy pad 804 through heating and cooling of the oxygen supplied by the oxygen generator/concentrator 810. In a typical embodiment, a humidifier 1021 is disposed between the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 and the therapy blanket/pad 804. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 10, the humidifier 1021 is disposed between the compression pump 910 and the therapy blanket/pad 804; however, in other embodiments, the humidifier 1021 may be disposed between the oxygen generator/concentrator 810 and the compression pump 910. In a typical embodiment, the humidifier 1021 facilitates delivery of oxygen that is humidified above ambient humidity to the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen delivery is at a partial pressure of approximately 22 mmHg.

FIG. 11 is a diagrammatic illustration of a combination therapy pad according to an exemplary embodiment. In a typical embodiment, the combination therapy pad 804 includes a plurality of fiber optic strands 72 to project ultraviolet light onto a wound area (not explicitly shown). In

various embodiments, the fiber optic strands 72 may be cleaved or side-emitting fibers; however, one skilled in the art will recognize that any type of fiber-optic strand could be used. In a typical embodiment, the combination therapy pad 804 also includes a plurality of oxygenation/removal ports 1102. In a typical embodiment, the oxygenation/removal ports 1102 alternate between providing oxygen therapy and vacuum therapy to the wound area.

Still referring to FIG. 11, in a typical embodiment, oxygen therapy and vacuum therapy is administered to the combination therapy pad 804 via an evacuation/oxygenation line 1104. The evacuation/oxygenation line 1104 is fluidly coupled to the pressure switch 921. The pressure switch 921 is fluidly connected to the compression pump 910 and the vacuum pump 918. Thus, in a typical embodiment, the pressure switch 921 is capable of adjusting the combination therapy pad 804 between vacuum treatment and oxygenation therapy.

Still referring to FIG. 11, in various embodiments, a luer lock 1106 is fluidly coupled to the combination therapy pad 804. During treatment, it is often necessary to administer various medications to a wound site. Such administration often requires removal of a wound dressing such as, for example, the combination therapy pad 804. Frequent removal of the wound dressing can increase risk of further damage to tissue immediately surrounding the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the luer lock 1106 allows for administration of medications and other therapeutic compounds directly to a wound site without the need to remove the combination therapy pad 804.

FIG. 12 is a diagrammatic illustration of a combination therapy pad according to an exemplary embodiment. In a typical embodiment, the combination therapy pad 1200 includes the plurality of fiber optic strands 72 to project ultraviolet light onto a wound area (not explicitly shown). In a typical embodiment, a combination therapy pad 1200 also includes a radio frequency ("RF") antenna 1202. In a typical embodiment, the RF antenna 1202 comprises a wire 1204. The wire 1204 extends along a length of the combination therapy pad 1204. In a typical embodiment, the wire 1204 is disposed within the combination therapy pad 1200 so that, during use, the wire is in close proximity to a wound area. In various embodiments, the wire 1204 is insulated to reduce risk of electric shock to a patient.

FIG. 13 is an exploded view of a combination therapy pad according to an exemplary embodiment. A combination therapy pad 1300 includes a first layer 1302 having a first central gap 1304 formed therein. In a typical embodiment, the first layer 1302 is constructed of, for example, urethane. A second layer 1305 is disposed below the first layer 1302 and includes an adhesive bottom surface 1306. A second central gap (not explicitly shown) is formed in the second layer 1305. In a typical embodiment, the second layer 1305 is constructed of, for example, urethane. The first layer 1302 and the second layer 1305 are coupled to each other around a perimeter of the first layer 1302 and the second layer 1305 so that the second central gap aligns with the first central gap 1304. A fiber-optic array 1308 is disposed between the first layer 1302 and the second layer 1305 so as to fill a space defined by the first central gap 1304 and the second central gap.

Still referring to FIG. 13, a third layer 1310 is disposed above the first layer 1302. The third layer 1310 includes a recessed central area 1312. The recessed central area 1312 is fluidly coupled to a vacuum tube 1314 via a first port and a therapeutic fluid tube 1316 via a second port. An antenna 1318 is coupled to the third layer 1310. The antenna 1318 is

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formed into a loop and is generally arranged around a perimeter of the recessed central area 1312. In a typical embodiment, the first layer 1302, the second layer 1305, and the third layer 1310 are coupled to each other via a process such as, for example, adhesive bonding or welding.

Still referring to FIG. 13, during operation, the adhesive bottom surface 1306 is placed on a bodily region of a patient proximate a wound area. In a typical embodiment, the adhesive bottom surface 1306 is oriented such that the second central gap is positioned over the wound area. Thus, the adhesive bottom surface 1306 is not in direct contact with the wound area. The fiber-optic array 1308 is disposed over the wound area and, in various embodiments, may contact the wound area. The fiber-optic array 1308 delivers UV lighting to the wound area thereby promoting cleaning and disinfection of the wound area. The vacuum tube 1314 applies negative pressure to the wound area thereby removing undesirable fluids, tissues, and the like from the wound area. The therapeutic fluid tube 1316 provides a therapeutic fluid such as, for example, humidified oxygen to the wound area.

Still referring to FIG. 13, during operation, a pulsed radio-frequency (“RF”) signal having a pulse frequency on the order of, for example 27 MHz, is transmitted to the antenna 1318. In a typical embodiment, an amplitude of the pulsed RF signal is on the order of, for example, a fraction of a Watt. Such an amplitude is below a threshold where federal licensing is typically required. The antenna 1318 receives the pulsed RF signal from a radio-frequency source and transmits the pulsed RF signal to a region in close proximity to the wound area. Exposing the wound area to the pulsed RF signal has been shown to be beneficial to healing by encouraging intracellular communication. In particular, pulsed RF signals have been shown to stimulate cellular bonding, and metabolism.

FIG. 14 is a schematic diagram of a wound-infusion system according to an exemplary embodiment. The wound-infusion system 1400 includes a controller 1401 having a first disconnect 1403 and a second disconnect 1405. The first disconnect 1403 is fluidly coupled to an oxygen concentrator 1416 and the second disconnect 1405 is fluidly coupled to a pump 1414. A patch 1402 includes an infusion tube 1408 and a vacuum tube 1410. The infusion tube 1408 is fluidly coupled to the first disconnect 1403 and the vacuum tube 1410 is fluidly coupled to the second disconnect 1405. Thus, in operation, vacuum pressure, generated by the pump 1414, is applied to the patch 1402 via the second disconnect 1405 and the vacuum tube 1410. Similarly, oxygen, supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1416, is applied to the patch 1402 via the first disconnect 1403 and the infusion tube 1408.

Still referring to FIG. 14, a reservoir 1404 is provided with the patch 1402. In a typical embodiment, the reservoir contains a therapeutic agent such as, for example, saline. The reservoir 1404 is fluidly coupled to the infusion tube 1408 via an infusion solenoid 1426 and a temperature control 1406. In a typical embodiment, the infusion solenoid 1426, when open, fluidly couples the reservoir 1404 to the patch 1402 via the infusion tube 1408. Thus, oxygen, supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1416, pushes the therapeutic agent through the infusion tube 1408 to the patch 1402. In a typical embodiment, oxygen supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1416 passes through humidifier 1421. The humidifier 1421 facilitates delivery of oxygen that is humidified above ambient humidity to the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen delivery is at a partial pressure of approximately 22 mmHg. When closed, the infusion solenoid 1426 isolates the reservoir 1404 from the

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infusion tube 1408 and the patch 1402. In a various embodiment, the temperature control 1406 may regulate a temperature of the therapeutic agent thereby facilitating application of thermal therapy to a wound area (not shown) via the patch 1402. For example, in various embodiments, the temperature control 1406 may raise the temperature of the therapeutic agent to a level above a body temperature of a patient. An exudate bottle 1412 is fluidly coupled to the vacuum tube 1410. During operation, the exudate bottle 1412 collects fluids and materials removed through the patch 1402 by operation of vacuum pressure supplied by the pump 1414. Thus, the pump 1414 remains sterile during operation.

Still referring to FIG. 14, an oxygen solenoid 1424 is disposed within the controller 1401 and is fluidly coupled to the oxygen concentrator 1416 and the first disconnect 1403. When open, the oxygen solenoid 1424 fluidly couples the oxygen concentrator 1416 to the first disconnect 1403. When closed, the oxygen solenoid 1424 isolates the oxygen concentrator 1416. An oxygen vent 1430 is fluidly coupled to oxygen concentrator 1416, the oxygen solenoid 1424, the first disconnect 1403 and an exterior environment. During operation, the oxygen vent 1430 allows oxygen supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1416 to be vented to the exterior environment. An oxygen-vent solenoid 1428 is fluidly coupled to the oxygen vent 1430. When open, the oxygen-vent solenoid 1428 allows oxygen supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1416 to be vented to the exterior environment. When closed, the oxygen-vent solenoid 1428 prevents oxygen supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1416 from being vented to the exterior environment. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen supplied by the concentrator is in the range of approximately 75% to approximately 100% oxygen.

Still referring to FIG. 14, a pump solenoid 1418 is disposed within the controller 1401 and fluidly coupled to the pump 1414 and the second disconnect 1405. When open, the pump solenoid 1418 fluidly couples the pump 1414 to the second disconnect 1405. When closed, the pump solenoid 1418 isolates the pump 1414. A vacuum vent 1432 is fluidly coupled to pump 1414, the pump solenoid 1418, the second disconnect 1405 and an exterior environment. During operation, the vacuum vent 1432 allows pressure generated by the pump 1414 to be vented to the exterior environment. A vacuum-vent solenoid 1422 is fluidly coupled to the vacuum vent 1432. When open, the vacuum-vent solenoid 1422 allows pressure generated by the pump 1414 to be vented to the exterior environment. When closed, the vacuum-vent solenoid 1422 prevents pressure generated by the pump 1414 from being vented to the exterior environment. A patch solenoid 1420 is fluidly coupled to the pump 1414 between the vacuum vent 1432 and the second disconnect 1405. When open, the patch solenoid 1420 fluidly couples the second disconnect 1405 to the pump 1414. When closed, the patch solenoid 1420 isolates the second disconnect 1405 and the patch 1402. The patch solenoid 1420, when closed facilitates testing of the patch 1402 to ensure a proper seal with the wound area (not shown).

FIG. 15 is a flow diagram of a process for administering infusion therapy in conjunction with vacuum therapy and oxygenation therapy according to an exemplary embodiment. A process 1500 begins at step 1502. At step 1504, a therapeutic agent such as, for example, saline, any wound-treating drugs, antibiotics, or any combination thereof is administered to a wound area via the patch 1402. Vacuum pressure is also administered to the wound area via the patch 1402. In a typical embodiment, the vacuum pressure is in the range of approximately 0 mmHg to approximately 150

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mmHg. During step 1504, the temperature control 1406 regulates the temperature of the therapeutic agent to achieve a therapeutically-beneficial temperature. In a typical embodiment, the therapeutically-beneficial temperature is in the range of ambient temperature to approximately 105° F. In a typical embodiment, step 1504 has a duration of approximately 10 seconds. At step 1506, the pump 1414 is turned off and the pump solenoid 1418 is closed. The therapeutic agent continues to be administered to the wound area via the patch 1402. In a typical embodiment, step 1506 has a duration of approximately 10 seconds. At step 1508, the oxygen-vent solenoid 1428 is opened allowing oxygen supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1416 to be vented to the exterior environment. In a typical embodiment, step 1508 has a duration of approximately 5 seconds. At step 1510, the patch solenoid 1420 and the infusion solenoid 1428 are closed while the vacuum vent solenoid 1422 and the oxygen vent solenoid 1424 are opened. In a typical embodiment, step 1510 has a duration of approximately 20 seconds. At step 1512, the vacuum vent solenoid 1422 and the oxygen vent solenoid 1424 are closed. In a typical embodiment, step 1512 has a duration of approximately 15 minutes to approximately 16 minutes. At step 1514, the pump solenoid 1418, the patch solenoid 1420, the oxygen vent solenoid 1428 are opened thereby allowing the wound area to be flushed. In a typical embodiment, step 1514 has a duration of approximately 30 seconds. The process ends at step 1516.

FIG. 16 is a schematic diagram of a wound-care system according to an exemplary embodiment. The wound-care system 1600 includes a controller 1601 having a first disconnect 1603 and a second disconnect 1605. The first disconnect 1603 is fluidly coupled to an oxygen concentrator 1616 and the second disconnect 1605 is fluidly coupled to a pump 1614. A patch 1602 includes an infusion tube 1608 and a vacuum tube 1610. The infusion tube 1608 is fluidly coupled to the first disconnect 1603 and the vacuum tube 1610 is fluidly coupled to the second disconnect 1605. Thus, in operation, vacuum pressure, generated by the pump 1614, is applied to the patch 1602 via the second disconnect 1605 and the vacuum tube 1610. Similarly, oxygen, supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1616, is applied to the patch 1602 via the first disconnect 1603 and the infusion tube 1608.

Still referring to FIG. 16, oxygen supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1616 passes through humidifier 1621. The humidifier 1621 facilitates delivery of oxygen that is humidified above ambient humidity to the wound site. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen delivery is at a partial pressure of approximately 22 mmHg. An exudate bottle 1612 is fluidly coupled to the vacuum tube 1610. During operation, the exudate bottle 1612 collects fluids and materials removed through the patch 1602 by operation of vacuum pressure supplied by the pump 1614. Thus, the pump 1614 remains sterile during operation.

Still referring to FIG. 16, an oxygen solenoid 1624 is disposed within the controller 1601 and is fluidly coupled to the oxygen concentrator 1616 and the first disconnect 1603. When open, the oxygen solenoid 1624 fluidly couples the oxygen concentrator 1616 to the first disconnect 1603. When closed, the oxygen solenoid 1624 isolates the oxygen concentrator 1616. An oxygen vent 1630 is fluidly coupled to oxygen concentrator 1616, the oxygen solenoid 1624, the first disconnect 1603 and an exterior environment. During operation, the oxygen vent 1630 allows oxygen supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1616 to be vented to the exterior environment. An oxygen-vent solenoid 1628 is fluidly coupled to the oxygen vent 1630. When open, the oxygen-vent solenoid 1628 allows oxygen supplied by the oxygen

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concentrator 1616 to be vented to the exterior environment. When closed, the oxygen-vent solenoid 1628 prevents oxygen supplied by the oxygen concentrator 1616 from being vented to the exterior environment. In a typical embodiment, the oxygen supplied by the concentrator is in the range of approximately 75% to approximately 100% oxygen.

Still referring to FIG. 16, a pump solenoid 1618 is disposed within the controller 1601 and fluidly coupled to the pump 1614 and the second disconnect 1605. When open, the pump solenoid 1618 fluidly couples the pump 1614 to the second disconnect 1605. When closed, the pump solenoid 1618 isolates the pump 1614. A vacuum vent 1632 is fluidly coupled to pump 1614, the pump solenoid 1618, the second disconnect 1605 and an exterior environment. During operation, the vacuum vent 1632 allows pressure generated by the pump 1614 to be vented to the exterior environment. A vacuum-vent solenoid 1622 is fluidly coupled to the vacuum vent 1632. When open, the vacuum-vent solenoid 1622 allows pressure generated by the pump 1614 to be vented to the exterior environment. When closed, the vacuum-vent solenoid 1622 prevents pressure generated by the pump 1614 from being vented to the exterior environment. A patch solenoid 1620 is fluidly coupled to the pump 1614 between the vacuum vent 1632 and the second disconnect 1605. When open, the patch solenoid 1620 fluidly couples the second disconnect 1605 to the pump 1614. When closed, the patch solenoid 1620 isolates the second disconnect 1605 and the patch 1602. The patch solenoid 1620, when closed facilitates testing of the patch 1602 to ensure a proper seal with the wound area (not shown).

The previous Detailed Description is of embodiment(s) of the invention. The scope of the invention should not necessarily be limited by this Description. The scope of the invention is instead defined by the following claims and the equivalents thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of treating a wound area, the method comprising:
 - covering a wound with a dressing;
 - coupling the dressing to an oxygen source via a first tube having a first disconnect;
 - coupling the dressing to a vacuum pump via a second tube having a second disconnect;
 - administering to the wound at least one of a first treatment modality and a second treatment modality;
 - wherein the first treatment modality comprises:
 - supplying oxygen from the oxygen source to a humidifier coupled to the first tube between the dressing and the first disconnect;
 - utilizing the humidifier to increase a relative humidity of the oxygen above an ambient relative humidity;
 - delivering, via the first tube, the humidified oxygen to the wound via a tube associated with the dressing;
 - and
 - wherein the second treatment modality comprises:
 - opening a pump solenoid and a patch solenoid disposed between the vacuum pump and a bottle;
 - applying via the vacuum pump and the second tube, negative pressure to the dressing;
 - collecting, in the bottle coupled to the second tube between the dressing and the second disconnect, exudate from the wound;
 - wherein administration of the first treatment modality and the second treatment modality overlap in time; and

wherein closing an oxygen solenoid and the patch solenoid isolates the dressing and facilitates pressure testing of the dressing.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the first treatment modality and the second treatment modality are administered sequentially.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the humidified oxygen is delivered to the wound at a pressure above ambient pressure.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the applying facilitates removal of exudate from the wound.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the humidified oxygen is delivered to the wound at a pressure below ambient pressure.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the humidifier is a proton-exchange membrane.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the oxygen source is an oxygen concentrator.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the delivering comprises varying concentration of the oxygen.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the humidifier comprises a proton-exchange membrane.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the humidifier comprises a pressure-swing adsorption device.

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